

The copy of the queenes highnes cōmission. 47



LIZABETH by the grace of God, Queene of Englande, Fraunce, & Ireland, defender of the fayth. &c. TO our trustie and right welbeloued William Allen, Knight, Lord Maior of our Citie of London, and to our trustie & welbeloued the Aldermen & Recorder of our said Citie whiche now we are, and for the tyme hereafter shalbe, and to euery of them, greeting. VVHEREAS in the Parliament holden at westminster, in the. xxxiii. yere of the raigne of our late deare father of worthy memorie king Henry the eight, one act or statute was then and there made, for the mayntenaunce of Artillerie, and debarring of vnlawful games. By the whiche good statute, amongst many

other thinges, it was provided, that the fathers, gouernours, & maisters of the youth of this our Realme, shoulde in diuers and sundry sortez, trayne and bryng by theyr youth in shooting in the long bowe, & shoulde haue for that purpose seuerall bowes and arrowes, in number and quantitie according to their ages and yeres, vpon suche payne and penaltie as is expessed in the sayd statute, as by the same statute moze at large it doth & may appeare. And being geuen to vnderstande, that for lacke of due search whether euery person & persons haue bowe and arrowes, according to the tenor of the sayd act, the commendable exercise and vse of shooting, and the rest of the good deuises & prouisions conueyned in the sayd statute, is therfore in the most partes of this our Realme vtterly forgotten, and not accomplished. And to the intent that shooting may be used and exercised within this our Realme as in tymes past, and vnlawful games suppressed & put out of vse, we haue thought it conuenient for good consyderations vs specially mouyng, to nominate, assigne, and appoynt you to be our Commissioners, geuyng vnto you and euery of you, and to al & euery your deputies within your seuerall wardes, and other officers and ministers appoynted by the said statute, ful power and auctoritie by vertue of these presents, in our name, not only fro tyme to tyme as often as neede shal require, to make due and lawfull searche in euery place within our said Citie of London, and the suburbes of the same, aswell within liberties as without, aswell for suche as vse vnlawfull games, as also for such as kepe houses or alleys for vnlawfull games: but also whether euery person for hym selfe, his seruantes, & other youth in his or theyr seuerall houses, haue sufficient furniture and prouision of bowe and arrowes, & haue and do vse and occupie the same, according to the true meanyng of the sayde statute.

And to the end the same may be the better vnderstanded and knowen, our pleasure & commaundement is, that al such bowes & arrowes that euery person ought to haue by the order of the sayd statute, ye shall cause the parties to bryng to some conuenient place or places, within the parish where suche parties dwell, by the discretion of you our sayde Commissioners, or any of you, there to be viewed and scene by you our sayde Commissioners, or other your deputies, or other officers and ministers appoynted in that behalfe. vpon whiche searche and examination, yf you or any of you our sayde Commissioners, or any officer or minister abouesayde, shall fynde any person or persons, eyther not furnished with bowe and arrowes, or not vsyng the same, as by the sayde statute is limited and appoynted: or any person or persons vsyng vnlawfull games, or keepyng houses or alleys for vnlawfull games, contrary to the meaning of the sayde statute: that then our pleasure is, that you the sayde Lord Maior, Aldermen, and Recorder, & euery of you, by gentle admonition, shall do your good endeour to cause a reformation to be had therein, that the exercise of shootyng may be vsed and continued by as many of our good subiectes of euery estate, as can or may vse the same. And yf you can not by gentle admonition and order, cause the offenders to reforme them selues in the premises: then our pleasure is also that you, or any two of you, shal cause the names and dwelling places of such offenders to be noted and certified vnto the Lord Chauncelour, or Lord keeper of the great seale of England for the tyme being, to the intent we may cause suche order and direction to be taken and had therein, as by the lawes and statutes of this our Realme is provided in that behalfe. Wherefore we wyll and commaunde all and singuler our officers, ministers, and subiectes of our sayde Citie and suburbes, aswell within the liberties as without, that they and euery of them be aydyng, helpyng, and assyding, and at the commaundement of you the sayde Lord Maior, the Aldermen, and Recorder, as aforesayde, in the due execution of this our Commission, as they and euery of them tender our pleasure, and wyl aunswere for the contrary at theyr perils. In witnesse whereof. &c. Witnesse our selfe. &c.

God saue the Queene.

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Cum priuilegio Regiæ Maiestatis.